

Message Text

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15

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INFO AMEMBASSY PARIS

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AMCONSUL MONTREAL

C O N F I D E N T I A L OTTAWA 3839

MONTREAL ALSO FOR USREP ICAO

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PINS, EAIR, CA

SUBJ: CIVAIR: TWA HIJACKING OF SEPTEMBER 10

REF: OTTAWA 3778

1. STU GRANT (EXECUTIVE OFFICER, CIVIL AVIATION SECURITY, MINISTRY OF TRANSPORT) AND TCO ON SEPTEMBER 22 BRIEFLY REVIEWED RECENT TWA INCIDENT FROM VIEWPOINT OF BILATERAL COORDINATION WHILE AIRCRAFT WAS IN CANADA. GRANT WAS GENEROUS IN HIS PRAISE OF THE FINE COOPERATION BETWEEN FAA AND MOT THROUGH THE OPEN-LINE TELEPHONE SYSTEM ESTABLISHED ONCE THE HIJACKING BEGAN. HE EMPHASIZED THAT ALTHOUGH OTHER GOC AGENCIES WERE INVOLVED, MOT HAD THE SOLE RESPONSIBILITY FOR DECISIONS SINCE AT NO POINT IN THE SITUATION AT MONTREAL AND GANDER WERE THE AIRCRAFT DOORS OPENED. (IF THAT HAD OCCURRED, RCMP OR OTHER POLICE AGENCIES WOULD HAVE TAKEN OVER, HE SUGGESTED.) USG VIEWS RELAYED THROUGH FAA, HE SAID, FULLY RECOGNIZED THIS SITUATION.

2. GRANT NOTED THAT OTHER GOC AGENCIES (NOTABLY EXTAFF, RCMP AND SOLICITOR GENERAL'S OFFICE) WERE INVOLVED
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AND WITH EXCEPTION OF EXTAFF HAD THEIR OWN PEOPLE AT

MOT OPERATIONS ROOM. HE APPEARED, HOWEVER, TO SUGGEST THE GOOD GOC INTERAGENCY RELATIONS DURING THE CRISIS MIGHT HAVE BEEN EVEN BETTER IF EXTAFH HAD HAD ITS OWN LIAISON MAN RIGHT AT MOT INSTEAD OF HAVING TO RELY ON AN MOT OFFICIAL TO RELAY NEWS AND COMMENT.

3. GRANT INDICATED THAT MOT POST-MORTEMs ON EVENT ARE EMPHASIZING TWO AREAS OF FUTURE WORK:

A. DEVELOPMENT OF BETTER MEANS TO DELAY AIRCRAFT ON THE GROUND DURING HIJACK SITUATIONS AND THUS ENCOURAGE MORE OPPORTUNITIES FOR DIALOUGE WITH CULPRITS;

B. DEVELOPMENT OF BETTER INVOLVEMENT BY FLIGHT CREW IN ASSESSMENT OF TACTICAL SITUATION (ESPECIALLY NATURE OF WEAPONS) AND BETTER MEANS OF ADVISING GROUND OF WHAT IS ACTUALLY GOING ON; THIS MAY TAKE FORM OF CHECK LIST FOR CREW MEMBERS (TO BE DEVELOPED BY SOCIOLOGISTS AND PSYCHIATRISTS) AS TO WHAT TO LOOK FOR AND OF MEANS OF GETTING CABIN INFORMATION TO COCKPIT FOR COMMUNICATION TO GROUND AS COCKPIT SITUATION PERMITS.

4. GRANT SAID HE LOOKED FORWARD TO WORKING CLOSELY WITH FAA IN THESE STUDIES AND HE REITERATED HIS PRAISE FOR THE FINE COOPERATION WHICH EXISTS BETWEEN MOT AND FAA ON A ROUTINE BASIS AND IN A CRISIS SITUATION LIKE THIS. FINALLY, HE ADVISED TAPES OF CONVERSATIONS INVOLVING PLANE IN CANADA HAD JUST BEEN TURNED OVER TO USG THROUGH EMBASSY LEGATT.

5. COMMENT: ABOVE CONVERSATION CONFIRMS SEVERAL POINTS IN REFTTEL. FIRST, THERE WAS A THIRD DIRECT LINK BETWEEN OTTAWA AND WASHINGTON, THE MOT/FAA LINK BEING IN ADDITION TO THE FBI/RCMP AND DEPT/EXTAFH LINKS. SECOND, THE SEVERAL LINES OF COMMUNICATION DID GIVE RISE TO SOME LACK OF COORDINATION ON THE CANADIAN END SINCE EXTAFH WAS NOT REPRESENTED IN THE MOT OPERATIONS ROOM. FINALLY, GOC REACTIONS APPEAR TO BE BUILT ON A SERIES OF INDEPENDENT CONDITIONS. AS INDICATED IN REFTTEL, DECISION TO HOLD OR RELEASE AIRPLANE APPARENTLY

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DEPENDENT ON WHETHER REQUESTS OR DEMANDS CAME FROM PILOT OR FROM TERRORISTS. NOW IT APPEARS THAT DECISION-MAKING JURISDICTION RESTED ON WHETHER AIRCRAFT DOOR WAS OPENED OR NOT. BOTH STRIKE EMBASSY AS OVERLY LEGALISTIC DISTINCTIONS AND REVEAL, WE BELIEVE, AN AD HOC CANADIAN APPROACH RATHER THAN A PREDETERMINED AND COMPREHENSIVE PLAN. THIS REINFORCES OUR SUGGESTION THAT DEPARTMENT MIGHT WISH TO ENCOURAGE CANADIANS TO

CONSTRUCT AN INTEGRATED CONTINGENCY PLAN WITHOUT DELAY.
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